

THE RIFF DELEGATION.

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LONDON, 6 . 9 1922

Wandsworth
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Telegram: ASSRI. LONDON.

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The Secretary,
The League of Nations.

Sir,

The enclosed documents, one is signed by Mohamed Ben Mohamadi Bujibar and by A bd el Kerim ben Hadj Ali, the duly accredited representatives of the Riff, who have full powers.

The other document is from an appeal from Mohamed Abdul Kerim, the President and Commander in Chief.

I remain, Sir,

Yours faithfully,

John A. Small

TO THE CIVILISED NATIONS.

A 23247

The following is the translation of an open letter addressed "To the Civilised Nations" by the Amir Mohammad Abdul Karim of Riff, Morocco:-

We have already communicated with the Ambassadors of certain Powers at Tangiers, complaining of Spain and we do not know whether our communications have reached you.

To-day we again appeal for your assistance to humanity and ask you to act for the well-being of mankind at large irrespective of religion or creed.

It is now high time that Europe, who, in this twentieth century claims that she stands to uphold the standard of civilisation and to uplift humanity, should carry this noble principle from the domain of precept into that of practice and should stand up in defence of the aggrieved against the aggressor, and for the vindication against the strong, of the rights of the weak, whose sense of traditional nobility may drive him, unless help be forthcoming, to but one end---self-annihilation.

Riff is nowadays the arena of warfare, warfare

which has no justification in the eyes of the Lord and which will cause the useless destruction of many Spaniards and Riffians.

The Spaniards believe that they have been entrusted by Europe with the work of reformation and civilisation in Riff. But the Riffians ask: "Does reformation consist in destruction of habitations by the use of forbidden weapons, does it consist in interference in religion, or in usurping others' rights? Or is it a name for the annexation of another's land under cover of protection? The object of protection is to preserve the rights of and protect the subjects in question and Europe can now see that we are in need of someone who will protect us from the aggression of this power against our liberty, our independence, our honour and our women.

The rising of Riff came as a consequence of the oppression and transgression of the Spanish youths placed in authority there. Their powers were extended over the Great Muslim Divines, the civil officers and native troops; so they began to take possession of land and people - possession characteristic of the days of barbarism - but simply because they go by the name of Europeans, they claim to be civilised, while as a matter of fact, far from being reformers or protectors, they are only blind conquerors.

Riff has lived a free life and its men are being sacrificed today in defence of their freedom and religion.

Riff does not object to modern civilisation, nor is she averse to projects of reformation; neither will she

oppose mutual commercial relations with Europe. Riff aims at the establishment of local government, which is essential to protect her own rights and those of foreigners according to the terms of commercial agreements binding European powers and those of Western Africa. But Riff does not like the reins of government being in the hands of men who receive foreign gold as the price of their authority and patriotism, who entrust the land and its people to those who offer them money and who have taken care to look after only their own personal interests; who are now, under the cloak of various titles conferred upon them, merely tools of the Spaniards' interests, who have no regard for Islamic laws or national customs.

Riff is anxious to set up a system of government for herself, dependant upon her own will; and to found her own laws and commercial treaties so as to be the protector of her internal and foreign rights. Europe could not refuse such a government so long as it does not oppose European rights and reforms and civilisation in any way.

Europe hears that there exists in Riff a so-called "Caliph" with a "Spanish Protectorate" and "Protectors". She may therefore think these are constructed constitutionally and are ruling justly; but there is nothing of the sort.

Riff has already appealed for support to those with a sense of justice in Europe and has addressed a communication to the representatives of the Powers and is still under arms

to drive out the destroyers, waiting to hear the answers of the civilised nations. If they interfere and solve the problem in a way satisfactory to Riff and protect the rights of the two parties, Riff would then feel sure that their claims to humanity and civilisation were bona fide; but if they stand aside and do not call a conference, inviting thereto the leaders of Riff, to substantiate their statements and undertake to fulfil any agreement reached, it will then be clear that Europe only means to fight against the whole Mohammedan world, with no matter what weapons or in what ways.

We, however, cannot believe that the conscience of those, whether Presidents or Princes, holding the political reins of the civilised world, would be satisfied with such a stain on it; in this, we mean especially those countries who are bound by strong cords to the world of Islam. Time itself will fulfil or destroy our hopes and right opinion will in due course judge our hopes at their real worth.

What was the object of Europe in holding the conference of Algeciras? Did she mean thereby to establish law and order, promote public weal and guarantee economic gain? If the motive was good and noble and free from any greed of political or military control (as we undoubtedly believe it was) this is exactly what Riff wants. She has no objection whatever to these conditions. All she wants is relief from Spanish oppression, from military aggression and the establishment of her own local government, with the

administration resting in her own hands.

Does Europe find in this anything prejudicial to her interests? Or affecting the rights of her communities? Is it any racial or national prejudice that makes her close the doors of her political circles against those who are suffering from the Spaniards?

If Europe is not prepared to listen to the grievances of Riff and regards them as far from the truth, let her find out the truth from the Spaniards themselves - from those in the house of Representatives, who declared that it is necessary to withdraw, owing to their failure and to the outrages committed by soldiers and others which made it impossible to pacify the indignation and anger of Riff.

These our grievances, are addressed openly to you, O civilised nations of Europe, and peace be upon you.

(Signed).

Muhammad A bdul Karim.

LONDON,

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1922

THE GENERAL COUNCIL OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

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We, the duly accredited representatives of the actual government of the Riff, Morocco, beg to announce to you that we have a duly elected representative government comprising deputies from 41 tribes of the Riff and Yomara, Morocco.

1. We desire to make an arrangement with Spain for peace.
2. We are willing to agree to a delimitation of geographical limits between ourselves and Spain.
3. We have a duly elected representative assembly and are governing our country with full recognition of the desires of the League of Nations.
4. Our Parliament is elected for a period of three years and three years etc.
5. Our Government is chosen from our elected representatives and by them.
6. We are willing to open up our country to the commerce of all nations.
7. We are prepared to guarantee the rights of all nations in all that concerns trade and will in no case place charges upon the same heavier than in other districts of Morocco.
8. We guarantee the inviolability of the lives of other nationals and are capable of giving full protection to them.
9. We are willing to give proofs and guarantees that we can govern the country in the interests of peace and

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international commerce.

10. We ask you to receive a fully accredited and regular demand signed by the chiefs of every tribe and their deputies.
11. We ask that this demand is considered at the present reunion.
12. We ask that through the League, Spain be asked to allow our representatives free access by the sea to their country.

عبد الحليم بن حجة
عبد الحليم بن حجة
عبد الحليم بن حجة
Mr. Ben M. Bnyitar
Abd Elkarim ben Hadj
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